

The Herndon Planning Commission and Town staff want to thank all those who came to this meeting and shared their thoughts and ideas for the Herndon 2030 Comprehensive Plan.

HERNDON 2030 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

MEETING SUMMARY: April 14, 2007, 10:00AM Public Meeting in the Herndon Municipal Center Town Council Chambers at 765 Lynn Street, Herndon, Virginia

General Concerns on Land Use, Housing or other Comprehensive Plan Issues:

- The need to re-invest in the Town and particularly to re-invest in the neighborhood improvement areas
- Provide affordable housing opportunities, particularly “workforce housing” as opposed to low-income housing or subsidized housing
- Encourage the provision of housing choices for seniors and recognize that 2 and 3-level single-family detached and townhouse structures are not the best for seniors due to climbing stairs.
- Encourage energy efficiency as a part of housing plans

Comprehensive Plan Land Use

Staff asserted that the 1990 Comp Plan was innovative when adopted and that it included the flexible approach of Adaptive Areas. Various regional patterns and impacts on the Town were discussed. There was agreement to re-examine the Fairfax County Transit Oriented Development (TOD) principles recently adopted by the Board of Supervisors and to study development occurring across the toll road from Herndon in Fairfax County.

Consensus Goals or Objectives for Land Use:

1. Implement traffic calming and discourage through traffic on Elden Street in the downtown.
2. Encourage different modes of transportation
3. Provide excellent pedestrian facilities throughout town.
4. Enhance connectivity for pedestrians and enhance the quality of pedestrian facilities to truly encourage alternate modes of transportation such as biking and walking.

5. Develop new trails and sidewalks including key route and links connecting to the transit station areas (Herndon Monroe and Route 28 stations).
6. Rename the Services and Industries land use category to reflect the shift away from industrial or warehouse use to the prevalent use for office buildings and service businesses.
7. Redevelopment and a mix of uses to be encouraged in the vicinity of the Herndon-Monroe and Route 28 Metrorail stations, with higher density possible.
8. Preserve areas for service businesses and “flex space.” These services are needed by Town residents. Otherwise these businesses will no longer be able to operate within the Town and they will be located far from Town residents.
9. Preserve green space (or provide additional open space/green space) by allowing development to rise vertically. (i.e. higher than current zoning allows)
10. Seek alternate means of providing parking facilities (i.e. structured parking on multiple levels) in order to provide green space.

Consensus Goals or Objectives for Housing:

1. Provide for affordable, work force housing. Higher density for this type of housing may be needed due to the high cost of land.
2. Higher housing density should occur along major roadways, such as the Herndon Parkway, where the increased traffic generated by the developments can be accommodated.
3. Stormwater maintenance and environmental regulations need to be enforced. Currently there are no fines for not maintaining privately owned stormwater ponds.
4. Higher density housing should be located in the Service and Industries area on the adopted land use map, especially near the future rail station. Review Fairfax County’s policies and regulations on housing near future rail stations.
5. Town needs to support environmentally sensitive or “green” housing initiatives.
6. The designation of higher density housing areas, as a new land use category on the land use map, should be considered.

7. Foreclosures are becoming a concern in Town. Create policies or provide information, such as mortgage education, to existing and future home owners in order to maintain long-term home ownership.
8. Consider a Housing and Redevelopment Board for the Town.
9. Review permission of accessory dwelling units on single-family lots as an option for creating work force housing.
10. Mixed-use land use designations and zoning districts should be defined as a combination of residential and commercial, not a combination of different housing types.
11. Town policies should encourage the creation of charter and private schools.
12. Town needs to invest in the Residential Improvement Areas by providing public improvements, such as infrastructure and streetscape, which will encourage and nurture neighborhood revitalization.
13. Preserve what housing we have. There is a good mix of housing types and prices.
14. Consider designating some of the existing “affordable” housing for redevelopment and/or provide assistance for residents in affordable neighborhoods the Town would like to preserve.
15. Consideration should be given to providing multi-family housing or mixed use behind Hutchison Elementary due to the proximity of the proposed Route 28 Metro Station.
16. The plan should encourage a variety of housing types for seniors. Examples include one-story living, multi-family housing with elevators and larger condominiums.
17. There should be some high density, mixed-use development in the Downtown, along Elden Street. Certain strip malls along Elden should be encouraged to redevelop into a pedestrian friendly, mixed-use environment.
18. Development needs to include the preservation of usable open space and green space. There should be incentives for creating these features.
19. Is a 20 year plan too long? A ten year plan (2020) should be considered since economic cycles are typically ten years.

20. Policies should be created for the Town to assist Homeowners Associations with enforcement issues, such as physical appearance of dwelling units, and public health items including trash and overgrown grass which can lead to rats.
21. Focus neighborhood conservation policies on supporting and maintaining the appearance of the neighborhood. The focus should not necessarily be on keeping the existing housing types and densities.
22. Residential and commercial mixed-use development should occur near the proposed Herndon-Monroe metro station and in the Downtown. Market Commons in Arlington is a good example.
23. Emphasis of new developments should focus on providing needs and services for residents. They should not be considered as an economic development tool to provide for tourists.
24. Herndon needs to provide a variety of housing options for all incomes and all stages of life and for those with disabilities.
25. Housing policies need to encourage energy efficiency or incentives to construct energy efficient structures.
26. Different types of housing need to be considered other than what we have now. Patio homes and one-story homes on small lots need to be considered.
27. When development occurs, there needs to be an analysis of the impacts of the development on road capacity, school enrollment, public safety response time, and parks and recreational services.
28. The Town should consider the use of impact fees as opposed to proffers.
29. Existing traffic study requirements should be reviewed, as the current policies do not seem to reduce traffic problems.

Final comments, after group discussion:

1. Preserve the Downtown boundary as in the existing Comp Plan; develop a mix of uses and not just housing in the downtown
2. Develop shuttles, trolley and/or other frequent transit service, with focus on providing connection to the rail stations and the business areas
3. Consider the use of eminent domain for the purposes of economic development

4. Preserve green space; include additional green space as part of the Metro station redevelopment